

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A contact center for receiving and routing communications from a customer to a plurality of agents to elicit a response, the contact center comprising:
  - a. at least one hub configured to receive and route the communications from the customer, the at least one hub including:
    - i. at least one server configured to receive the communications from the customer;
    - ii. at least one gateway configured to receive a voice call from the customer;
    - iii. at least one router coupled to the at least one server, the at least one router configured to normalize the communications from the customer; and
    - iv. an application server coupled to the at least one router, the application server configured to route the communications based upon a set of predetermined routing criteria, the application server configured with ACD software that matches at least one node to the communications; and
  - b. the at least one node coupled to the at least one hub, the at least one node configured to receive the communications, the at least one node further configured to route the communications to the plurality of agents.
2. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a node router configured to interface between the at least one hub and the at least one node, wherein the node router provides the application server with the availability status of the at least one node and the plurality of agents.
3. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 further comprising an immediate workflow engine configured in the application server, wherein the immediate workflow engine includes the predetermined routing criteria.

4. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 3 further comprising at least one corporate CRM database coupled to the at least one hub, wherein the immediate workflow engine is configured to a set of CRM data from the at least one corporate CRM database.

5. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 wherein the at least one server includes:

- a. an email server configured to receive non-realtime communication including emails and voice messages;
- b. a web collaboration server configured to receive realtime communications including web collaboration requests; and
- c. a voice server coupled to at least one gateway, the voice server configured to receive the voice call from the at least one gateway.

6. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 5 wherein the at least one router includes:

- a. an email router corresponding to the email server;
- b. a web collaboration router corresponding to the web collaboration server; and
- c. a voice router corresponding to the voice server.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently amended) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 7 wherein the software ACD optimally matches the plurality of agents to the communications.

9. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 8 wherein a first one of the at least one nodes match the communications to a second one of the at least one nodes when a plurality of nodes exist, and the at least one hub is not operational, and further wherein the at least one node matches the communications to the plurality of agents when the at least one hub is not operational.

10. (Currently amended) The contact center as claimed in claim 8 further comprising a ~~nuasis~~ database, coupled to a workflow engine, the ~~nuasis~~ database configured to record a set of transaction data produced by the workflow engine.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 10 further comprising a contact history viewer, the contact history viewer configured to allow the plurality of agents to view the set of transaction data.

13. (Currently amended) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 wherein the software ACD calculates a contact priority value for every communication when one of the plurality of agents is available.

14. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 wherein the at least one node includes:

- a. a node voice server configured to receive a local voice call from a local gateway;
- b. a node voice router coupled to the node voice server and configured to receive the local voice call from the node voice server; and
- c. a node application server coupled to the node voice router and the at least one hub, wherein the node application server is configured to receive the local voice call from the node voice router, and further wherein the node application server is configured to receive the communications from the at least one hub.

15. (Currently amended) ~~The contact center as claimed in claim 1 wherein the at least one gateway includes:~~ a. A contact center for receiving and routing communications from a customer to a plurality of agents to elicit a response, the contact center comprising:

a. at least one hub configured to receive and route the communications from the customer, the at least one hub including:

i. at least one server configured to receive the communications from the customer;

ii. at least one gateway configured to receive a voice call from the customer, the at least one gateway including a proxy table configured in each of the at least one gateway, wherein the at least one gateway sends the voice call to one of at least one proxy server; and b. a call restoration data table configured in each of the at least one gateway, wherein the call restoration data table provides data to restore a lost call;

iii. at least one router coupled to the at least one server, the at least one router configured to normalize the communications from the customer; and

iv. an application server coupled to the at least one router, the application server configured to route the communications based upon a set of predetermined routing criteria; and

b. at least one node coupled to the at least one hub, the at least one node configured to receive the communications, the at least one node further configured to route the communications to the plurality of agents.

16. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 15 wherein the voice call is divided by the at least one gateway into a session initiation protocol portion and a real time protocol portion.

17. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 wherein the at least one hub includes the at least one proxy server, the at least one proxy server configured to receive the session initiation protocol portion of the voice call.

18. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 16 further comprising at least one media server configured in the at least one hub, the at least one media server configured to receive the real time protocol portion for the voice call.

19. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 15 wherein the at least one node are coupled to each of the at least one hub with a local area network connection.

20. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 15 wherein the at least one gateway is configured such that when one of the at least one gateway fails, the remainder of the at least one gateway remains operational.

21. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 15 wherein the proxy table selects the appropriate proxy server based on a priority scheme.

22. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 15 wherein the data provided to the call restoration data table is transmitted to the call restoration data table in a session initiation protocol packet, further wherein the session initiation protocol packet includes a header and an SDP body.

23. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 22 wherein the data provided to the call restoration data table is stored as a key value pair, further wherein the key value pair is derived from the header and the SDP body.

24. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 5 further comprising:  
a. a plurality of shared file folders configured in the email server where non-realtime communications are received and stored, wherein an aged communication is extracted from the plurality of shared file folders based on a set of predetermined escalation criteria;

b. an escalation service coupled with the plurality of shared file folders such that the escalation service routes the aged communication to the immediate workflow engine; and

c. a plurality of designated agents such that the aged communication is displayed on a desktop of a first designated agent after receiving the aged communication from the immediate workflow,

wherein the first designated agent provides an immediate response to the aged communication on the desktop, and further wherein the escalation service escalates an immediate communication to the immediate workflow engine for routing to the first designated agent.

25. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 wherein the desktop includes a visual indicator, further wherein the visual indicator includes an expiration time for the aged communication in the plurality of shared file folders.

26. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 wherein the communication is designated as immediate based on the set of predetermined escalation criteria before the communication becomes aged.

27. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 wherein the escalation service checks a present threshold for a maximum number of immediate workflows and delays escalating the communications designated as immediate until the number of immediate workflows is below the threshold.

28. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 further comprising a second designated agent, wherein when the first designated agent does not answer the aged communication, the immediate workflow routes the aged communication to the second designated agent.

29. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 28 further comprising sending an acknowledgment message when the first and second designated agents are unavailable.

30. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 28 wherein the aged communication is routed to the second designated agent after the first designated agent does not answer the prompt.

31. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 28 wherein the aged communication is routed to the second designated agent after the first designated agent answers the prompt by declining to respond to the aged communication.

32. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 wherein the first designated agent is prompted when the first designated agent does not respond within a predetermined timeout period after the aged communication is displayed on the desktop.

33. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 wherein the set of predetermined escalation criteria are variable such that the set of predetermined escalation criteria will change while the first designated agent responds to the aged communication.

34. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 wherein the first and second designated agents may select non-realtime communications from the plurality of shared file folders that are not designated as aged, and further wherein the first and second designated agents respond to those non-realtime communications not designated as aged.

35. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 24 wherein an agent is designated based on a set of predetermined designation criteria.

36. (Currently amended) ~~The contact center as claimed in claim 1 further comprising:~~

A contact center for receiving and routing communications from a customer to a plurality of agents to elicit a response, the contact center comprising:

- a. at least one hub configured to receive and route the communications from the customer, the at least one hub including:
  - i. at least one server configured to receive the communications from the customer;
  - ii. at least one gateway configured to receive a voice call from the customer;
  - iii. at least one router coupled to the at least one server, the at least one router configured to normalize the communications from the customer; and
  - iv. an application server coupled to the at least one router, the application server configured to route the communications based upon a set of predetermined routing criteria;
- b. at least one node coupled to the at least one hub, the at least one node configured to receive the communications, the at least one node further configured to route the communications to the plurality of agents:
  - c.a. a remote data access device;
  - d.b. a remote terminal coupled with the remote data access device through a data circuit; and
  - e.e. a remote telephone coupled with the at least one gateway through a telephone circuit,

wherein when a remote agent logs the remote terminal into the contact center, a voice component of the voice call is transmitted from the at least one gateway to the remote telephone and a data component of the voice call is transmitted from the contact center to the remote terminal.

37. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 36 wherein when the remote terminal logs into the contact center, the remote terminal provides a phone number to direct the transmission of the voice component of the voice call from the at least one gateway to the remote telephone.

38. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 36 wherein the remote agent can respond to the voice call using the remote telephone and the remote terminal.

39. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 36 wherein the telephone circuit is a public switched telephone network.

40. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 36 wherein the data circuit is a high speed internet connection.

41. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 36 wherein the data circuit is a high speed wireless internet connection.

42. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 36 wherein the remote data access device is a VPN device.

43. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a graphical user interface for displaying on an agent desktop, the graphical user interface including:

a. a shutters managed display having a task bar, wherein the task bar includes at least one managed application;

b. at least one shutter icon corresponding to each one of the at least one managed applications; and

c. a workflow having at least one step corresponding to each one of the at least one shutter icons, wherein one of the at least one shutter icons is selected according to the corresponding step of the workflow, and the managed application corresponding to the selected shutter icon is displayed in a managed application display area,

wherein a predetermined set of rules determines the size, placement and visibility of the at least one managed application in the managed application display area.

44. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 43 further wherein the managed application corresponding to the selected shutter icon is displayed outside of the managed application display area.

45. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 43 further comprising a quick start bar, wherein the quick start bar includes at least one non-managed application.

46. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 43 further comprising a contact center control panel illustrating current contact information.

47. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 43 wherein the graphical user interface is displayed on the agent desktop having a display and an input device.

48. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 47 wherein the input device is used to selectively input data in to any one of the at least one managed applications.

49. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 43 wherein when one of the plurality of agents select any of the at least one shutter icons, the corresponding managed application is displayed in the managed application display area.

50. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a second graphical user interface for displaying in an application on the agent desktop, the second graphical user interface including:

a. a view including a plurality of wedges, wherein each of the plurality of wedges represents a value;

b. a thumb corresponding to each of the plurality of wedges, the thumb configured to allow a user to change the value of the corresponding wedge; and

c. a track forming an outside edge of the view, the track configured to allow the user to change an attribute of the second graphical user interface,

wherein when the user changes the value of any of the plurality of wedges, the remaining wedges adjust their values according to a set of predetermined allocation criteria.

51. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 wherein the thumb is configured such that the user changes the value of one of the plurality of wedges by dragging the thumb.

52. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 wherein the thumb and the track are configured such that the user changes the value of one of the plurality of wedges by clicking on the track.

53. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 wherein the sum of the values of the plurality of wedges is a constant value.

54. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 53 wherein the track is configured such that the user changes the attribute of the graphical user interface by dragging the track.

55. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 54 wherein the attribute of the second graphical user interface is the constant value.

56. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 wherein any of the plurality of wedges can be locked by the user such that the value corresponding to the locked wedge will not change.

57. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 further comprising an allocation algorithm, wherein the allocation algorithm creates a relationship between any of the values of the plurality of wedges.

58. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 further comprising a plurality of text boxes corresponding to each of the plurality of wedges, wherein the text boxes include the value of each of the plurality of wedges, and further wherein the user may change the value of any of the plurality of wedges by entering a new value into any of the plurality of text boxes.

59. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 further comprising a plurality of control buttons, wherein the control buttons are programmable, thereby allowing the user to customize the function of the control buttons.

60. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 wherein the view is a circle.

61. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 wherein the view is a rectangle.

62. (Original) The contact center as claimed in claim 50 wherein the view is a bar graph.

63. (Currently amended) A method of distributing communications in a contact center to elicit a response, the method comprising:

- a. receiving the realtime and non-realtime communications in at least one hub, wherein the at least one hub includes at least one server configured to receive the communications;
- b. normalizing the communications, wherein at least one media router is configured for normalizing the communications; and
- c. routing the communications, wherein an application server is configured to route the communications to at least one node based upon a set of predetermined routing criteria, further wherein the at least one node is configured to route the communications to at least one destination; and
- d. receiving a voice call from the customer wherein at least one gateway is configured to receive the voice call.

64. (Currently amended) A contact center for distributing communications to elicit a response, the contact center comprising:

- a. means for receiving the communications in at least one hub;
- b. means for normalizing the communications wherein the normalizing means are coupled to the receiving means; and
- c. means for routing the communications to at least one node based upon a set of predetermined routing criteria, wherein the routing means are coupled to the normalizing means; and
- d. means for interfacing between the at least one hub and the at least one node wherein the interfacing means includes a node router, further wherein the node router provides the application server with the availability status of the at least one node and the plurality of agents.

65. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 1 wherein the plurality of agents have a common set of controls for receiving and responding to the communications.

66. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 65 further comprising a softphone, wherein the plurality of agents utilize the softphone for receiving and responding to the communications.

67. (Canceled)

68. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 63 further comprising interfacing between the at least one hub and the at least one node with a node router, wherein the node router provides the application server with the availability status of the at least one node and the plurality of agents.

69. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 63 further comprising configuring an immediate workflow engine in the application server, wherein the immediate workflow engine includes the predetermined routing criteria.

70. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 69 further comprising extracting a set of CRM data from at least one corporate CRM database, wherein the at least one corporate CRM database is coupled to the at least one hub, and further wherein the immediate workflow engine is configured to extract the set of CRM data from the at least one corporate CRM database.

71. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 63 67 further comprising:

- a. configuring an email server in the at least one server to receive non-realtime communication including emails and voice messages;
- b. configuring a web collaboration server in the at least one server to receive realtime communications including web collaboration requests; and
- c. coupling a voice server to the at least one gateway, the voice server configured to receive the voice call from the at least one gateway.

72. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 71 further comprising:

- a. configuring an email router corresponding to the email server;
- b. configuring a web collaboration router corresponding to the web collaboration server; and
- c. configuring a voice router corresponding to the voice server.

73. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 63 further comprising matching the at least one node to the communications with a software ACD configured in the application server.

74. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 73 wherein the software ACD optimally ~~optimally~~ matches the plurality of agents to the communications.

75. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 74 wherein a first one of the at least one nodes match the communications to a second one of the at least one nodes when a plurality of nodes exist, and the at least one hub is not operational, and further wherein the at least one node matches the communications to the plurality of agents when the at least one hub is not operational.

76. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 74 further comprising recording a set of transaction data produced by a workflow engine with a ~~nuasis~~ database, wherein the ~~nuasis~~ database is coupled to the workflow engine.

77. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 76 further comprising configuring a contact history viewer such that the plurality of agents can view the set of transaction data.

78. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 73 further comprising the software ACD calculating a contact priority value for every communication when one of the plurality of agents is available.

79. (Currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 63 further comprising:

a. configuring a node voice ~~server~~ ~~server~~ to receive a local voice call from a local gateway;

b. coupling a node voice router to the node voice server and configuring the node voice router to receive the local voice call from the node voice server; and

c. coupling a node application server to the node voice router and the at least one hub, wherein the node application ~~server~~ ~~server~~ is configured to receive the local voice call from the node voice router, and further wherein the node application ~~server~~ ~~server~~ is configured to receive communications from the at least one hub.

80. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 63 wherein the plurality of agents have a common set of controls for receiving and responding to the communications.

81. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 64 further comprising means for receiving a voice call from the customer wherein the receiving means includes at least one gateway configured to receive the voice call.

82. (Canceled)

83. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 64 further comprising means for configuring an immediate workflow engine in the application server, wherein the immediate workflow engine includes the predetermined routing criteria.

84. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 83 further comprising means for extracting a set of CRM data from at least one corporate CRM database, wherein the at least one corporate CRM database is coupled to the at least one hub, and further wherein the extracting means includes an immediate workflow engine configured to extract the set of CRM data from the at least one corporate CRM database.

85. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 81 further comprising:

- a. means for configuring an email server in the at least one server to receive non- realtime communication including emails and voice messages;
- b. means for configuring a web collaboration server in the at least one server to receive realtime communications including web collaboration requests; and
- c. means for coupling a voice server to the at least one gateway, the voice server configured to receive the voice call from the at least one gateway.

86. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 85 further comprising:

- a. means for configuring an email router corresponding to the email server;
- b. means for configuring a web collaboration router corresponding to the web collaboration server; and
- c. means for configuring a voice router corresponding to the voice server.

87. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 64 further comprising means for matching the at least one node to the communications wherein the matching means include a software ACD configured in the application server.

88. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 87 wherein the matching means optimally matches the plurality of agents to the communications.

89. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 88 further comprising a second means for matching wherein the second matching means includes a first one of the at least one nodes configured to match the communications to a second one of the at least one nodes when a plurality of nodes exist, and the at least one hub is not operational, and further wherein the at least one node matches the communications to the plurality of agents when the at least one hub is not operational.

90. (Currently amended) The contact center as claimed in claim 88 further comprising means for recording a set of transaction data produced by a workflow engine, wherein the recording means includes a ~~muasis~~ database, wherein the ~~muasis~~ database is coupled to the workflow engine.

91. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 90 further comprising means for configuring a contact history viewer such that the plurality of agents can view the set of transaction data.

92. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 87 further comprising means for calculating a contact priority value for every communication when one of the plurality of agents is available, wherein the calculating means includes the software ACD.

93. (Previously Presented) The contact center as claimed in claim 64 wherein the plurality of agents have a common set of controls for receiving and responding to the communications.